THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c) In the Finance Bill 1994, the Finance Minister has proposed reduction in the rate of Expenditure Tax on the chargeable expenditure incurred in a hotel where the room charges per unit of residential accommodation is rupees 1200 or more per day, per individual from 20% at present to 10%. The proposed reduction will take effect from 1-6-94 and will apply in relation to assessment year 1994-95 and subsequent years.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Proposals for takings over of airports by NAA

3898. SHRIMATI CHANDRIKA ABHINANDAN JAIN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the conditions/norms laid down for taking over of management of an Airport by the National Airports Authority ;

(b) whether the National Airports Authority has received any proposals from different State Governments for taking over of some more Airports ;

(c) if so, the names of Airports, particularly in Gujarat and Maharashtra, in respect of which such proposals have been considered/received during 1993-94 so far ; and

(d) what is the present position in regard to each of these proposals ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) The main conditions/norms for taking over the management of an airport by the National Airports Authority (NAA) are ; the economic viability of operation and financial health of NAA.

(b) to (d) proposals were received from the Government of Gujarat for taking over of Surat airfield and from the Government of Maharashtra for taking over of Nanded aerodrome by NAA. Due to paucity of resources and the fact that these airports are economically unviable, it was decided that NAA would not be able to take over these airports.

भारत और दक्षिण अफ्रिका के बीच पर्यटन का विकास

3899. श्रीमती चन्द्रिका अभिनन्दन जैन : क्या नागर विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री 17 मार्च, 1994 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न 3079 के दिये गये उत्तर को देखेंगे और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) पर्यटन स्थलों और विभिन्न शहरों में स्थित ऐतिहासिक स्थलों का दौरा करने हेतु दक्षिण अफ्रीका से प्रति वर्ष कितने पर्यटकों के हमारे देश में आने की संभावना है और प्रति वर्ष कितने भारतीय पर्यटकों के इस प्रयोजन हेतु दक्षिण अफ्रीका जाने की संभावना है ;

(ख) दोनों देशों के बीच पर्यटन को बढ़ावा देने हेतु क्या कदम उठाए जाएंगे/उठाए जाने का विचार है और क्या इस संबंध में दोनों देशों के बीच किसी समझौते पर हस्ताक्षर किए गए हैं; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है ?

नागर विमानन और पर्यटन मंत्री (श्री गुलाम नबी आजाद) : (क) वर्ष 1993 के दौरान भारत की यात्रा पर आए दक्षिण अफ्रीका के पर्यटकों की संख्या 9,914 थी । दक्षिण अफ्रीका जाने वाले भारतीय पर्यटकों के आंकड़े उपलब्ध नहीं है ।

(ख) और (ग) दोनों देशों के बीच पर्यटक यातायात को संवर्धन करने के लिए एअर इंडिया ने 2 अक्तूबर, 1993 से दक्षिण अफ्रीका के लिए अपनी उड़ान प्रारंभ कर दी है और एक औपचारिक वायु सेवा करार को अन्तिम रूप दिया जा रहा है ।

Under cutting of fares by air taxi services

3900. SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the air taxi services have been engaging in acute under cutting of fares, to the detriment of IA ;

(b) if so, the details of the under cutting of fares effected by private airlines ; and

(c) Governments reaction to prevent such unfair practices ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (c) There is no restriction on fares to be charged by Air Taxi operators. Air taxi operators are free to fix fares in their best commercial judgement.

Recruitment to various posts under the Department of Civil Aviation

3901. DR. SANJAYA SINH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that various organisations under the Department of Civil Aviation are recruiting people from outside to various posts to fill up vacancies, in contravention of the Ministry's Order dated the 22nd November, 1993 ;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor ;

(c) the number of employees, category-wise, of Vayudoot who have been absorbed so far as per the abovementioned orders of the Ministry ;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ; and

(e) by when Government propose to absorb all the employees of Vayudoot and the modalities of the same ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) to (e) Only those vacancies, for which suitable Vayudoot employees are not available, are filled from the open market. Vayudoot employees are yet to be absorbed. The process has been initiated and preparatory work is being done.

Shortcomings in the working of the Air India

3902. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General has, in its report No. 3 of 1993 (Union Government-Commercial) pointed out some shortcomings in the working of Air India ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) the action taken or being taken by Government to remove these shortcomings ; and

(d) the details regarding percentage of total cost losses shown in Annual Report of Air India ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b) The Report has brought out that some of the investments made by Air India as at the end of the financial year 1991-92, which were in the form of Portfolio Management Scheme (PMS) deposits in the Citibank, deposits in the Indbank Merchant Banking Services Ltd., "Ready Forward" transactions etc. were in contravention of the provisions of the Air Corporations Act and instructions issued thereunder—which were applicable at the time the investments were made.

(c) Government's displeasure has been conveyed to Air India in this regard, and the CMD was asked to take urgent action to ensure that all investments were strictly in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Act. Action has also been initiated by Air India to fix responsibility for the irregular investments.

(d) No losses have been reported by Air India.

Contract for Helicopter for Oil India Pipeline in Assam

3903. SHRI JAGDISH PRASAD MATHUR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was a requirement of a helicopter for Oil India Pipeline in Assam ;

(b) if so, which parties were contacted for providing a helicopter ;

(c) whether Vayudoot was one of the parties who had a Bell Jet Ranger (206-A) with them, rentable for the job ;

(d) why was PHL granted this contract, when they did not have a suitable machine available with them and were permitted to sub-lease the contract, and under what terms and conditions ; and

(e) the amount that Vayudoot could have earned had it been given the contract ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Only M/s. Pawan Hans Limited was contacted by Oil India.

(d) The contract was awarded by Oil India in its best commercial judgement to Pawan Hans Limited, which is a Government company, and with whom Oil India had earlier business relations.

(e) Does not arise.

Licence to Sahara India Airlines

3904. SHRI O. P. KOHLI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the D.G.C.A. was initially not prepared to grant air taxi operator's licence to Sahara India Airlines on the ground that it had no experience in aviation ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the request for licence was rejected initially, but was reconsidered by Government : and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.